NewLife Series
EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP, MISSIONS
English, Tagalog & Cebuano Versions.

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BOOK 12

36 Foundational Salvation Truths

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book contains brief explanations of foundational salvation truths. Many of these truths have been discussed previously in this series, but they are discussed again in order to lay them firmly as foundations in a disciple's life.

- ONE TRUTH AT A TIME. This book is designed to serve as a resource for sharing, one truth at a time, in a group or one-on-one sharing, for devotional purposes or as a launching pad for deeper discussion.

- CONTINUING SERIES: This book may be studied straight through as scheduled in the series, discussing one or two truths for each weekly meeting.

- AS-NEEDED RESOURCE: Or you may use this book on AS NEEDED BASIS as a resource for materials to share in one-to-one personal time with your group or with an individual disciple. In this case, you may jump to Book 13, for your weekly study.

#1:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
GOD CREATED EVERYTHING PERFECT IN THE BEGINNING.

Genesis 1:1, 31: **1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **31** Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

(a) The Bible does not try to prove God's existence; rather, the Bible assumes God's existence.

(b) God is the Source, Guide and Goal of all creation and history (Romans 11:36).

(c) God created everything for His glory (Psalm 8:1; Revelation 4:11).

#2:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
IN THE BEGINNING GOD
CREATED HUMANS PERFECT IN HIS IMAGE.

Genesis 1:25, 27:
26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **27** So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

(1) PERSONALITY. God made human beings with material and spiritual components (Genesis 2:7), a physical body made from the earth but with a non-material personality (soul and spirit), which is able to have relationship, fellowship and partnership with God. God gave the human personality the faculties (abilities) of mind, emotion, will (freedom and ability to choose), conscience (to distinguish between good and evil), and speech (ability to communicate).

(2) AUTHORITY. God gave human beings the privilege and responsibility as rulers or managers of the earth and all other creatures (Genesis 1:26).

(3) PERFECT. God made human beings perfect (sinless) and placed them in a perfect environment in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8, 9).

#3:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
ALL HUMANITY SINNED.

Romans 3:23:
23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 5:12:
12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

(a) Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were created perfect and were placed in a perfect environment in the beginning. Tragically, when they encountered temptation, they listened to the voice of the enemy, they disobeyed God's clear command, and they fell into sin (Genesis 3).

(b) Sin has two aspects: first, sin is a violation of God's command; second, sin is a failure to measure up to God's glorious standard (Romans 3:23). We are sinners because we continually break God's commands. We are also sinners because we always fall short of God's requirements of holiness.

(c) Our first parents passed on to their children two things: first, the nature and condition of sin, the bent toward sin and hostility against God, Second, they passed on to their children the punishment of sin, which is death (Romans 5:12). This death has three stages: spiritual death or separation from God (Ephesians 2:1); physical death (Hebrews 9:27); second death or eternal separation from God (Revelation 21:8).

#4:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
GOD PROMISED A REDEEMER.

Genesis 3:15:
15 And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel."

(a) On the very day that our first parents fell into sin, God gave the very first promise of a Redeemer.

(b) This Redeemer will be born of a woman; this is the first hint of Christ's birth through the Virgin Mary (Galatians 4:4).

(c) Satan, the Serpent, will succeed in wounding the Redeemer's heel; this is the first hint of the death of Christ as the Sacrificial Lamb of God (John 1:29).

(d) The Redeemer will succeed in giving a deadly wound on the head of the Serpent; this is the first hint of Christ's complete victory over Satan, sin and death through His death and resurrection (Colossians 2:14, 15).

(e) The fact that God gave the promise of the Redeemer immediately after the fall into sin by our first parents is the very first announcement of the Gospel or Good News of God's great love for sinners (John 3:16).

#5:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
THE OLD TESTAMENT TELLS THE STORY
OF GOD'S CHOICE OF THE FAMILY LINE
THROUGH WHICH THE REDEEMER
WILL BE BORN INTO THE WORLD.

Matthew 1:1:
The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

(a) This family line initially consisted of Seth, Enoch, Noah, and Shem.

(b) God narrowed the family line to Abraham and to the 12 sons of Jacob or Israel.

(c) Of the 12 sons of Israel, the tribe of Judah was chosen, with King David along with Abraham as a major patriarch in Jesus' family ancestry.

(d) From Genesis 12 all the way to Malachi, the Old Testament is primarily the story of how God preserved the nation of Israel in order to bring forth the promised Redeemer into the world.

#6:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
THE OLD TESTAMENT FORETELLS
THE COMING OF CHRIST IN PROPHECIES,
SYMBOLS, AND CEREMONIES.

Luke 24:44, 45:
44 Then He said to them, "These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me." **45** And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

(a) We have already discussed the first prophecy about the coming of Christ found in Genesis 3:15. There are at least more than 40 OT prophecies about Christ, including about His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14), about His place of birth (Micah 5:2), about His atoning death (Isaiah 53) and His resurrection (Psalm 16:6-11), etc.

(b) The primary symbol in the OT for Jesus is as the sacrificial Lamb of God.

(c) The Tabernacle (and later the Temple) and its system of sacrifices and priestly ceremonies picture in detail the person and work of Christ as Redeemer. The entire book of Hebrews is a detailed explanation of all this.

#7:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
THE LAMB OF GOD IN THREE AGES

The scriptures picture the promised Redeemer as the Lamb of God, who marches across the pages of Bible history in three ages:

- IN ETERNITY PAST.

  Actually, eternity has no past, present or future. By eternity past we mean "before the creation of the world". In that past eternal age, the Lamb of God was already foreordained by God.

  1 Peter 1:19, 20:
  19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. **20** He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.

  Revelation 13:8:
  8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

- WITHIN HUMAN TIME & HISTORY.

  The Lamb of God entered human history to offer Himself on the cross as the atoning sacrifice on behalf of the salvation of humanity. He accomplished this sacrifice through the power of the eternal Spirit.

  Hebrews 9:14:
  14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

- IN ETERNITY FUTURE

  At the end of human history, the Lamb of God will reign with God the Father in the new heaven and new earth in the eternal kingdom. Before the creation of the world, the Father and the Son were eternally together. At the consummation of all God's plan for

creation, God the Father and the Son will continue to be together, reigning over all things from one throne and being worshiped together in one temple forever and ever.

Revelation 21:22, 23:
[22] But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. [23] The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light.

Revelation 22:3:
[3] The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.

#8:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
THE TRIUNE GOD WAS THERE IN THE BEGINNING.

In eternity past, we see the Three Persons of the Godhead, before the creation of the world:

- The Father, foreordaining His Son to be the Lamb of God;
- The Son in the presence of the Father, accepting the Father's plan;
- The eternal Spirit, in full agreement, will in time enable the Son to offer Himself on the cross.

Once the Plan of Redemption had been designed and agreed upon by the Triune God, the work of creation promptly began. And what do we see at the beginning of creation?

At creation, we see the Three Persons working in full unity with one another. Please note where each of the Three Persons are referred to or hinted at:

Genesis 1:1-3:
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **2** The earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

- Verse 1: "In the beginning God created" – God the Father is referred to here.
- Verse 2: "And the Spirit of God was hovering" – The Holy Spirit is umistakably indicated here.

- Verse 3: "Then God said, 'Let there be . . . " – The Son, God's creative Word (Logos) is hinted at here.

  Hebrews 1:1, 2:
  God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **2** has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.

  Hebrews 11:3:
  3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

  John 1:1-3:
  In the beginning was the Word (LOGOS), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

#9:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
JESUS THE WORD (LOGOS) IN THE BEGINNING.

Who is the WORD (LOGOS) described in the beginning by the apostle John as having three characteristics?

- The Logos was already existing in the beginning;

- The Logos was with the Father;

- The Logos as to His nature was God.

He is the same Logos referred to several verses further down in the chapter (John 1:14).

The Logos is Jesus, the Son of God Himself who came into the world, out of eternity, to be born as a human being in order to become the Lamb of God, who will offer Himself as a sacrifice for the redemption of humanity.

At the end of His earthly ministry, hours before His arrest on the eve of His crucifixion, this is how the Son of God described Himself in His last long earthly prayer to the Father.

John 17:1-5:
Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, **2** as You have given Him authority over all

flesh, that He [a]should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. **3** And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. **4** I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. **5** And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

A PERSON NOT AN IDEA

The Son of God as the Logos in the beginning was not merely an idea in the mind of the Father.

- The Logos was a Person with a definite existence and identity of His own;

- The Logos had the ability to be in relationship with God the Father, as the Greek prepositions indicate: He was with (PROS) God (John 1:1). PROS indicates a face to face relationship. He possessed a glory with (PARA) God. PARA indicates a position of one person being beside another person.

- The Logos possessed the same nature of God as the Father had.

- The Logos was not part of the creation; He could not even be the first of creation, as John 1:3 clearly makes that impossible.

If we say that the Logos was the first thing God created, the Logos Himself could NOT have been created, because "All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:3). Apart from the Logos, God could not make anything. The Logos was the Son of God, the divine creative Word, who existed with God from all eternity. There was never a time when the Son was not, as there was never a time when the Father was not. God the Father and God the Son necessarily coexisted with one another.

Those who teach that the Son's existence began when He was born as a human being are very obviously wrong. The Son had a living pre-existence as the Logos in eternity. This is why He is able to enter the world to be born as a human being in time and history.

#10:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
THE SON OF GOD IS BORN AS A HUMAN BEING:
THE HUMAN PERSPECTIVE

John 1:14:
14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Incarnation, the birth of the Son of God, the Eternal Logos who was with the Father before the creation of the world, may be viewed from two perspectives.

THE HUMAN PERSPECTIVE

This is the Incarnation from the perspective of the Virgin Mary.
From Luke 1:26-38, let's note the following facts about the incarnation.

- A HUMAN IMPOSSIBILITY.

The angel announced to Mary that she would give birth to a son. Bible commentators believe that Mary was probably a teenager of about 15-17 years of age, a chaste young virgin raised properly in a typical godly Jewish home, but one who wasn't naïve about life. She frankly protested to the angel that such a birth was a human impossibility in her condition as an unmarried virgin.

- A DIVINE MIRACLE

The virgin birth was humanly impossible. But the God of the impossible would bring it about Himself. Mary alone and no other woman in human history past, present or future, would experience giving birth as a virgin.

- THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORK

The virgin birth was the work of the Holy Spirit similar to the original creation of the first man in the beginning.

In creating the first man, God took a handful of clay, fashioned it into the shape of a man, and breathed into it the breath of life and it became a living being.

In a similar way, as the Holy Spirit enfolded the virgin Mary in His almighty power, He took something her humanity and molded it in her womb and breathed into it the breath of life and it became a human baby.

- DIVINE AND HUMAN

And what was Mary's virgin-born baby to be called?

Luke 1:31-33, 35:
31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. **32** He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. **33** And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." . . . **35** And the angel answered and said to

her, "*The* Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."

As we stand around the manger in Bethlehem and gaze on the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, we see a helpless infant no different from all other infants born that night all over the world, crying for milk and reaching out for a mother's warm embrace.

And yet we know that, wrapped in that tiny body, the almighty God, in the person of His Son, stepped out of His infinite freedom in eternity. And out of pure love for us sinners, He willingly surrendered Himself as the incarnate God to live for a season on earth within the prison walls of time and space and human history.

#11:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
THE SON OF GOD IS BORN AS A HUMAN BEING:
THE DIVINE PERSPECTIVE

The apostle Paul was writing to the Philippian believers about showing genuine humility towards one another within the church. He used the humility of Christ as the ultimate example to follow. In the process of describing Christ's humility, through the Holy Spirit's inspiration, the apostle also gave possibly the clearest description of the Incarnation from the divine perspective of the Son of God.

Philippians 2:5-8:
5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, **7** but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.
(NKJV)

This passage describes the process that Christ went through to make His Incarnation possible. Let's note the following truths:

- CHRIST'S PERSON & POSITION BEFORE HIS INCARNATION.

Before His incarnation, Christ existed as a person, possessing of a definite nature and definite position. As to His nature, He was "in the form of God". "Form" here means both the outer manifestation and inner nature of God. This is a clear proof of several facts:

1. That Christ already existed in the beginning before He was born as a human being;

2. That being "in the form of God", Christ possessed both the outer glory and inner nature as God;

3. That Christ possessed equality with God as to His nature and position.

- CHRIST GAVE UP HIS DIVINE GLORY

1. When confronted with the choice between retaining His divine position and coming down to be born as a human being on earth, He did not selfishly cling to His divine position;

2. He made Himself of no reputation. NIV translates this, "He made himself nothing". ESV renders it, "He emptied himself".

3. Commentators say, Christ gave up the outward manifestations of divine glory but not His inner nature as God, in order to clothe Himself with human nature. He remained God, who through the virgin birth became "Immanuel – God with us".

- CHRIST TOOK ON HUMAN NATURE IN ITS LOWEST MANIFESTATION.

The humility of Christ took several steps downwards:

1. He became a human being;

2. He accepted the lowest human position as a slave;

3. He willingly suffered wrongful death as a criminal, accepting the most shameful and painful punishment, death on a cross.

- CHRIST'S REASON FOR THE INCARNATION.

The reason for Christ's incarnation and what it ultimately led to in His humiliation, suffering, and shameful death on the cross, was to accomplish God's Plan of Salvation for humanity.

1 Peter 3:18:
18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring [f]us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 8:9:
9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

#12:

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
THE INCARNATE CHRIST
IS THE SECOND REPRESENTATIVE.

In the Bible, God revealed one over-arching principle: He established the principle of dealing with humanity through His appointed Human Representative. Adam as the original father of all humanity was the First Human Representative. According to this principle, all humanity was in Adam and everything that Adam did and all the consequences of his choices and deeds affected all his descendants.

Tragically, Adam fell into sin and all humanity fell with him and suffered with him all the consequences of his sin.

But soon after Adam's fall God promised a coming Redeemer, called the Seed of the Woman, who would defeat Satan and resolve the problem of sin and all its consequences (Genesis 3:15). Though not revealed in this first promise, God was giving this Redeemer to become the Second Human Representative, who will give a new start to humanity. The full revelation about Christ as the Second Representative came in the New Testament (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Romans 5:12, 15:
12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned
15 But the free gift *is* not like the [e]offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

1 Corinthians 15:21, 22, 49:
21 For since by man *came* death, by Man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. **22** For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.
49 And as we have borne the image of the *man* of dust, we[l] shall also bear the image of the heavenly *Man.*

Adam, the First Representative, fell into sin and dragged down all his descendants with him into a cursed world separated from God, under the bondage of decay and death and in slavery under Satan, the deceiving Usurper.

Christ, the Second Representative, lived a perfect human life, not by using His divine powers, but by complete faith and obedience in the power of the Holy Spirit. He conquered where Adam failed, and He redeemed and lifted up all who believe in Him into His blessed kingdom in full relationship with God, a world in process of deliverance from sin, decay, and death, and from Satan's power.

People now are offered a choice: whether to remain in Adam, the fallen First Representative, or to transfer over to Christ, the victorious Second Representative.

#13:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
CHRIST BECAME FULLY HUMAN – WITHOUT SIN

In our last lesson (Book 3, Lesson 6) we learned that God gave Adam as the First Representative Head for humanity. However, Adam fell into sin and with him all of humanity fell. Therefore, God gave a Second Representative Head, Jesus Christ, who would bring humanity back to God.

The first truth we must emphasize regarding Christ as our Second Representative is that He partook of our full humanity, in all its characteristics in the original creation.

But with one exception: Christ did not partake of human sin, because sin was not part of the original creation (John 1:1, 14; Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15).

These are some of the facts and experiences that prove Christ's true and full humanity.

- He was born of a human mother (Luke 2:1-7)
- He grew up as a normal human child (Luke 2:52)
- He experienced ...

1. Hunger (Matthew 4:2)
2. Thirst (John 4:7)
3. Fatigue (John 4:6)
4. Sleep (Mark 4:38)
5. Temptations (Luke 4:1,2,13; Hebrews 2:18; 4:15)
6. Sorrow (John 11:35)
7. He had flesh, bones, and blood (Luke 24:39-40; John 19:34)
8. He died and was buried (Luke 23:46; John 19:38-41)

#14:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
CHRIST GREW AND LIVED
AS A PERFECT HUMAN BEING.

As a normal human being, Christ first of all submitted to the authority of his human parents for 30 years (Luke 2:39, 40, 51).
These 30 silent years of His life is summarized in one verse:

Luke 2:52:
52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Although Christ experienced all temptations like any human being, He was different in that He committed no sin and lived a perfect life of obedience to God. As the Second Head of the Human Race, He succeeded where Adam failed (1 Peter 2:22; John 8:29, 46; Hebrews 4:15; 5:7-9; Romans 5:12-18).

At the end of His 30-year period of silent preparation, at the inauguration of His public ministry, with His baptism by John the Baptist, Christ received the stamp of God the Father's complete confirmation of His perfect life up to that point (Matthew 3:16, 17).

This stamp of approval was given again by God the Father at the Mount of Transfiguration as Christ was culminating His earthly life and ministry, when He was nearing His atoning death on the cross (Matthew 17:1-5; 2 Peter 1:16-18).

#15:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
CHRIST THE SPOTLESS LAMB OF GOD

1. SPOTLESS LAMB OF GOD

Christ's perfect human life qualified Him to be the spotless LAMB OF GOD, without defect of any kind, to serve as our substitute atoning sacrifice. In the Old Testament, God always required an unblemished animal sacrifice (lamb, goat, bull). All these animal sacrifices (foremost of which was the Passover Lamb) symbolized and pointed to Christ, the true Lamb of God (Exodus 12:5-7, 12, 13; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8).

2. AS A HUMAN BEING, HE COULD DIE FOR HUMANITY.

The Lamb of God was actually fore-ordained before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:19, 20; Revelation 13:8). His coming to the world was first promised in Genesis 3:15. His arrival was finally announced publicly by John the Baptist (John 1:29). As a human being, Christ could die for humanity (Hebrews 2:14, 15).

#16:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
CHRIST OVERCAME
ALL TRIALS & TEMPTATIONS.

1. CHRIST OVERCAME ALL TRIALS.

Trials refer to all the problems and sufferings that humans go through in a fallen world. Christ experienced all possible trials in order to become a sympathetic High Priest on behalf of believers in their times of need (Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-10).

2. CHRIST OVERCAME ALL TEMPTATIONS.

Temptations refer to all the attacks and solicitations to sin coming from Satan and all his hosts. Christ received all possible temptations in order to be a sympathetic High Priest on behalf of believers when they are under intense attacks from the enemy.

Christ experienced all Satan's tactics and strategems at the beginning of His ministry and throughout His whole time on the earth (Luke 4:1-13). The most intense temptations for Christ came at Gethsemane and at the Cross (Luke 22:39-44; Hebrews 12:2-4).

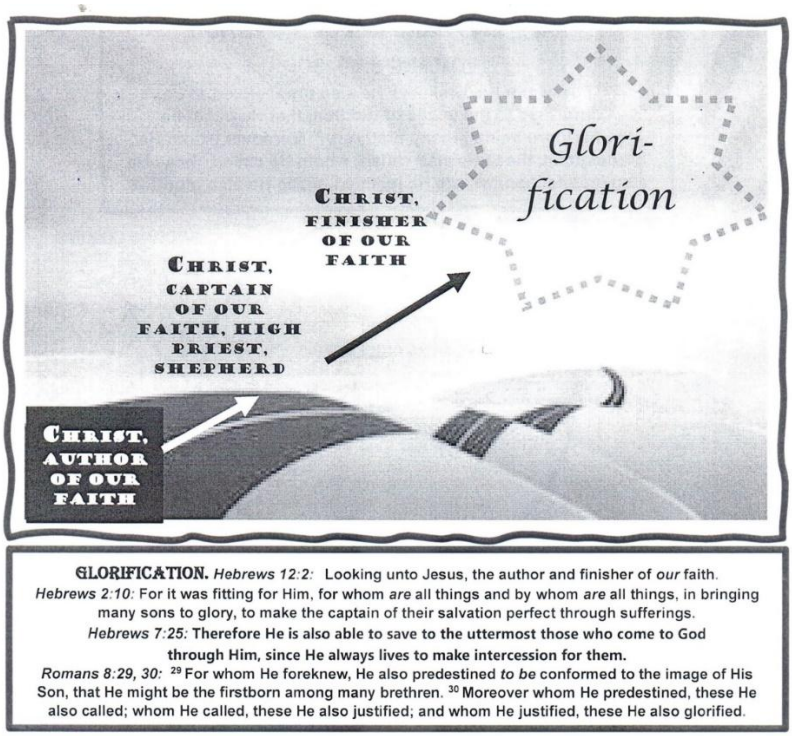
Christ agreed to be subjected to all of Satan's most malevolent temptations in order to overcome them all, and thereby qualifying as more than a sufficient all-conquering High Priest able to rescue His children who are under attack by all the demons of hell! (Hebrews 2:17, 18; 7:25; Luke 22:31, 32)

#17:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
CHRIST, THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE & END – PART 1

God's ultimate goal in His Plan of Salvation is to bring a Special Family to glory. To accomplish this goal, He gave His own Son Jesus to become the all-sufficient and exclusive Implementor as well as the Instrument of His plan (Hebrews 2:10).

The figure below shows the THREE WAYS by which Christ guarantees the accomplishment of God's plan:

- Christ is the Author of our faith;
- Christ is the Captain of our faith;
- Christ is the Finisher of our faith.



CHRIST IS THE AUTHOR OF OUR FAITH.

"Author" (from the original word ARCHEGOS) means source, founder, author. As ARCHEGOS, Christ is at the BEGINNING of our faith.

a. He is the Source and Giver of life (Acts 3:15).

b. He gave us repentance and forgiveness and new life (Acts 5:31).

c. John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus as doing two important works in redemption: as LAMB of God, and as BAPTIZER with the Holy Spirit (John 1:29-34).

(1) LAMB OF GOD

As Lamb of God, He took away the sin of the world. All the sins of the world were transferred on Him, and on the cross He paid the full penalty that those sins deserved. Through His atoning, substitutionary death He obtained forgiveness for all who put their faith in Him and reconciliation and restoration of relationship between them and God.

(2) BAPTIZER WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

But sinners need more than forgiveness and reconciliation; they need new spiritual life. Through sin people became dead spiritually. Someone said, "Christ did not come to make bad people good; He came to make dead people live."

Hence, Christ has a second great work, as the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit; meaning, the One who imparts new life by giving the Holy Spirit as the giver of new spiritual life as well as God's indwelling presence and power inside that new life (John 3:3, 5; Ephesians 2:1-5; Romans 8:15, 16).

#18:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
CHRIST, THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE & END – PART 2

CHRIST THE CAPTAIN OF OUR FAITH

The word CAPTAIN (also from the original word ARCHEGOS) means leader, the one at the front or head. In the figure above, we see Christ as being in the MIDDLE of our faith journey.

(1) He is the Captain, the Leader, at the head of His army (Hebrews 2:10).

(2) He is our High Priest who continually intercedes for us that our faith may not fail (Hebrews 7:25; Luke 22:31, 32).

(3) He is our Good Shepherd who guides us, protects us, provides for us, carries us, who promised never to leave or forsake us, our constant Companion throughout our journey (Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11; 46:3, 4; John 10:27-30).

Hebrews 13:5b in the Classic Amplifed Bible:

> … for He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you *nor* give you up *nor* leave you without support. [I will] not, [I will] not, [I will] not in any degree leave you helpless *nor* forsake *nor* let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!]

(4) He is the Perfect Example that we follow, in whose steps we walk on the path He has opened and cleared for us.

a) We must fix our eyes on His example (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

b) We must follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21-23). Someone said, Christ left footprints, and to follow Him we must put our feet into those footprints.

c) We must continually gaze on His glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). We gaze (continually behold) on the glory of the Lord through constant fellowship with Him in His Word and prayer.

#19:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
CHRIST THE BEGINNING,
MIDDLE & END – PART 3

CHRIST IS THE FINISHER.

The word FINISHER (from the original TELEIOTES) means one who brings a work to completion. Christ is at the END of our faith.

(1) God's plan is to bring together and unite all things under the headship of Christ (Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 1:19, 20).

(2) God will bring all believers into perfect conformity in union with His Son (Romans 8:29, 30; Hebrews 2:10-13; 1 John 3:2; Ephesians 4:13; Philippians 1:6; 3:20, 21; 1 Corinthians 15:49).

GOD'S MANDATE FOR CHRIST

The Plan of Salvation is the joint work of the Triune God, in which each Person of the Godhead fulfills a specific role (1 Peter 1:1). This verse is just one example of how the Triune God work together for our salvation:

- The foreknowledge of God the Father;
- The sanctification of the Spirit;
- The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

In this cooperation among the Triune Godhead, Christ received a specific mandate regarding the ultimate guarantee of our salvation.

What is God's mandate for Christ?

John 6:37-40:
37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. **38** For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. **39** This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. **40** And this is the will of Him who sent

Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

This is God's mandate: That Christ will not lose any person that God the Father has entrusted to Him for salvation.

That, my Christian brothers and sisters, is our sure hope: We who have come to Christ in faith for salvation will never be lost. Our salvation is assured, our eternal life is guaranteed!

Therefore, the most important question for you to answer with certainty is this: Have you truly believed in Christ alone for your salvation?

#20:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

To attain full maturity in our life in Christ, we must have a full view of God's Plan of Salvation. God Himself has revealed this full view in the Bible. This is a DIVINE REVELATION; it is not something discovered or deduced by HUMAN REASON. The Plan of Salvation has the following characteristics:

- God's Plan of Salvation was prepared before all creation and before all human history;

- God's Plan of Salvation is rooted in the free, sovereign power and wisdom and grace of God as Creator, Lord, Sustainer and Judge of His creation;

- God's Plan of Salvation is not influenced in any way by anything human (inclusive of all human qualities, inclinations, choices, actions or conditions) that God's omniscience and foreknowledge fully knew would happen in human history;

- God's Plan of Salvation presents a contradiction or paradox that's humanly impossible to reconcile: the contradiction between God's sovereignty versus human responsibility, that God ultimately decides who gets saved while at the same time holding every person accountable for his/her response to the Gospel offer of salvation;

- The only response humans can make to the contradiction between divine sovereignty and human responsibility is to bow in worship and submission to God and to leave the reasons of the divine mysterious decrees with God alone;

- The sole and ultimate goal of the Plan of Salvation is the glory of God and the good of His creatures.

Revelation 4:11:
"You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created."

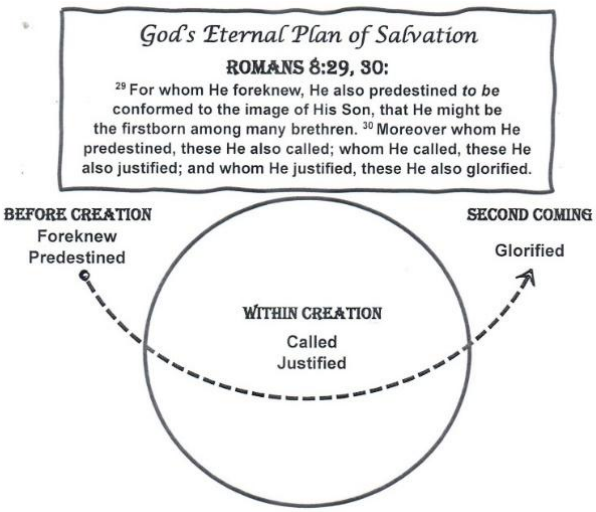
Romans 11:36:
For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

See also: Romans 9:14-24; Isaiah 46:9, 10; Job 42:1-6.

#21:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
FIVE DIVINE ACTIONS IN SALVATION

Romans 8:29, 30:
29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. **30** Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1. This scripture reveals to us the full program of God's plan, from eternity past to eternity future. Here we see the FIVE ACTIONS taken by the sovereign God to implement His plan of salvation and the time in which these actions are taken (please see figure below): foreknew, predestined (before creation); called, justified (within creation); glorified (at Christ's second coming). Please see figure below.



2. We must emphasize that these five divine actions are REVEALED. In other words, if God did not condescend to reveal these facts to us, we would never have known about them. We must equally emphasize that these are actions done by the SOVEREIGN and WISE and LOVING God. In succeeding lessons, we shall study each action one by one.

#22:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SALVATION – ACTION 1: FOREKNEW

God already knew, before creation, who would be members of His family. He FOREKNEW them. Theologians are divided into two groups regarding the interpretation of the word "foreknew".

1. One group says that God knew who would believe, and these are the people He chose to become members of His family.

2. The other group says that all people without exception (because of their sinful nature) would respond negatively to the Gospel call. However, God "foreknew" (singled out) specific individuals to whom He would grant the gift of faith so that when they heard the Gospel they would respond positively.

   Please read John 6:44, 63-65; Acts 13:48;16:14-15; Matthew 11:25-27.

3. Leaving the theologians to debate among themselves, one fact is clear: GOD ALREADY KNEW EVEN BEFORE THE BEGINNING WHO WOULD BE MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY. God already knew that you would be a member of His family!

4. The truth of God's sovereign foreknowledge is primarily for believers, not for unbelievers. For unbelievers, our message is the free offer of salvation through the Gospel (Revelation 22:17; Matthew 11:28). After a person comes to genuine faith in Christ and after being assured of being born again, he/she will be taught about the profound, mysterious truth of God's foreknowledge and election as a motivation for worship, thanksgiving and spiritual growth (Ephesians 1:1-12; John 15:16).

#23:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SALVATION – ACTION 2: PREDESTINED

For those people chosen by God (also called the elect) there is a divinely set destination. This is the meaning of PREDESTINED: to set a destination beforehand. Please keep in mind one fact about this predestination: the destination is not about the PLACE where the elect would live

eternally, although this is included. The destination is about their CHARACTER, the kind of persons they would become.

Yes, God wants you to be with Him forever in heaven someday. But MORE IMPORTANTLY, before He brings you to heaven, God wants to make you like His own Son in His perfect character, because heaven will be populated by only one kind of people: those who bear the exact likeness of God's Son Jesus Christ.

This is why we say, God is concerned:

a. Not about your earthly plans but about His eternal purpose;
b. Not about your happiness but about your holiness;
c. Not about your comfort but about your character;
d. Not about your satisfaction but about your sanctification.

This unmasks the weakness of most evangelistic presentations today. Most modern Christians present the Gospel as God's offer to bring people to a place called heaven. That is true; the Gospel promises eternal life in heaven someday. But that is not the primary emphasis of God's purpose. The call of the Gospel is a call to be in Christ and to become progressively formed, conformed and transformed into the perfect character of Christ, in order that we may bring eternal glory to God (Ephesians 1:3-12):

Some people ask how can they know they are predestined. Here are some questions that may clarify the issue: God predestines people to become holy in Christ. Do you even have a faint desire to be delivered from sin? Do you sense even a little hunger to live a holy and pure life? Do you have a longing to be closer to God? These spiritual stirrings, no matter how weak they might be, are signs of God's predestinating work in your heart. These stirrings should motivate you to begin seriously seeking after God.

#24:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SALVATION – ACTION 3: CALLED

The two divine actions FOREKNEW and PREDESTINED happened outside of human history. Within human history, the moment came when God caused the chosen individuals to be born and to grow up; and He placed these chosen ones in specific points in history and specific places in geography. Please read Acts 17:26-27.

At precisely the divinely appointed time, God CALLED each chosen individual through the Gospel proclamation. For some the call comes when they are young, for some when they are middle-aged, for some when they are old and even nearing the end of life.

The most important truth we need to know about this CALLING is that God is always sovereign regarding when and where and how the Gospel will come and to whom. As an illustration, from Acts 16:6-34, let's use the salvation experience of two people, one named Lydia and the other known to us as the Philippian jailer. How did these two persons hear the call of the Gospel? Please note the following facts:

1. The Holy Spirit directed Paul and Silas to go to Macedonia (vss, 6-13);

2. God opened the heart of Lydia (vs. 14);

3. God sent Paul and Silas to jail in order for the Philippians jailer to hear the Gospel and be saved (vss. 16-34).

The story of Lydia and the Philippian jailer demonstrates that God is always in control of the implementation of His Plan of Salvation. Before the creation of the world, God already FOREKNEW and PREDESTINED that Lydia and the Philippian jailer who would become members of His family. And in the lifetime of these two people, God arranged how and where and when they would hear His CALL through the Gospel proclamation of Paul and Silas.

In your own experience, how did God "engineer" your life circumstances in such a way that resulted in your hearing the Gospel and putting

#25:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SALVATION – ACTION 4: JUSTIFIED

The fourth action in the divine plan of salvation is JUSTIFIED. When an elect person hears the call of the Gospel, he/she will believe and God will JUSTIFY him/her.

Let's review the two important aspects of JUSTIFICATION, which we pointed out in a previous study. These two aspects are clearly shown in 2 Corinthians 5:21:

- ASPECT 1: OUR SINS ARE IMPUTED TO CHRIST.

- ASPECT 2: CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS IMPUTED TO US.

2 Corinthians 5:21:
For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

God transferred on Christ our sins, and He poured out on Him the full penalty for those sins on our behalf. With the penalty fully paid, we may now receive God's free gift of complete forgiveness through faith in Christ.

But forgiveness, though precious and important, gives us fresh start and a blank slate. We need something positive to make us fully acceptable before Gpd. God provides this by imputing to us the perfect righteousness of Christ. More correctly, God incorporates us into union with Christ, thus fully clothing us with Christ. Just as our union with the first Representative Man, the fallen Adam, clothed us with his sin and all its consequences; even so, our union with Christ, the perfectly obedient Second Representative Man, now covers us completely with His perfect righteousness which He lived as a perfect human being, thus making fully and permanently accepted before God in His beloved Son (Ephesians 1:6, 7).

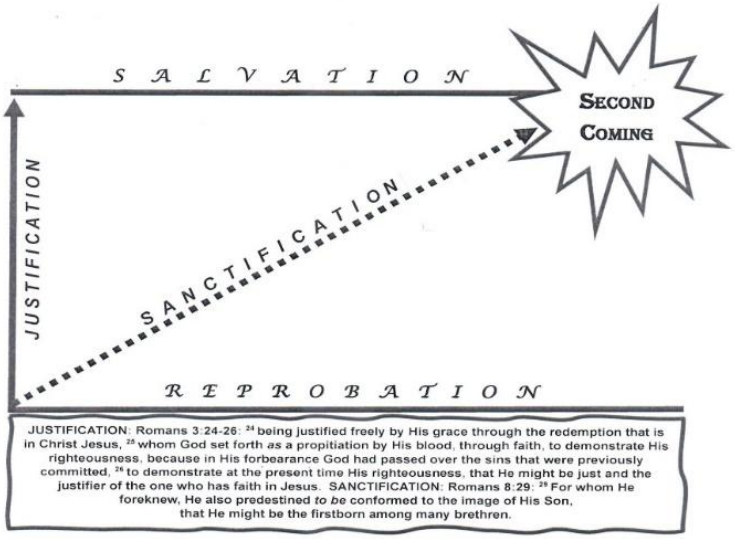
Romans 5:17-19:
17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) **18** Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment came* to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life. **19** For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

#26:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SALVATION – WHERE IS SANCTIFICATION?

One step seems to be missing from this 5 Step Plan of Salvation. From JUSTIFIED, we immediately jump to GLORIFIED. Doesn't the story of salvation include the vital step or process of SANCTIFICATION? Why does the apostle Paul seem to omit it altogether? Is this an oversight on his part?

In fact, there is no oversight or omission at all. Though not stated in plain words, SANCTIFICATION is assumed in the statement regarding PREDESTINATION: "He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son". That process of being conformed to the image of the Son of God is nothing more or less than the process of sanctification. That conformation process necessarily happens in the lifetime of a believer between the time of being JUSTIFIED to the time of being GLORIFIED at the Second Coming of Christ.

The relationship of sanctification to these two points (JUSTIFIED, GLORIFIED) is shown in the diagram below:



- JUSTIFICATION at the beginning point of salvation guarantees that we are permanently accepted and adopted in God's family through faith in Christ and in union with Him.

- GLORIFICATION at the end point of salvation guarantees that God's ultimate goal of conforming us to the image of His Son will surely be successfully achieved (1 John 3:2).

- SANCTIFICATION, the life-time process of conforming us to the image of Christ which happens in between the beginning and end points, is also a guaranteed aspect of salvation. For this process God has provided all the necessary tools and resources, the sum total of which is Christ Himself, His person, offices and ministries. Please carefully study these scriptures: Hebrews 2:10, 11; 5:7-10; 7:24, 25; 12:2.

#27:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SANCTIFICATION: SPIRITUAL GROWTH
NOT OPTIONAL

It is very significant and of utmost interest that, from the time we initially put our faith Christ and receive assurance of salvation through justification, our entire experience of salvation from that point on is encompassed in the life-time process of SANCTIFICATION – of being conformed to the image of Christ!

The fact of this process necessarily arises from the nature of the Christian life itself. The Christian life begins with the new birth, which means plainly that we begin as spiritual infants. The one law for an infant is to grow to maturity; a supporting law is that growth goes through definite stages of development.

- The apostle John mentions three main stages of development, paralleling physical human development: baby stage, youth stage, parent stage (1 John 2:12-14; 3:2, 3).

- The apostle Peter equally emphasizes the importance of this spiritual development and speaks both of the positive and negative steps that must be taken in order for this process to achieve its divinely set goal (1 Peter 2:1-5).

- The apostle Paul has strong words of rebuke against the pitfalls of remaining in spiritual childish immaturity (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).

- The author of the Book of Hebrews has equally solemn warnings and exhortations regarding the absolute importance of moving on to maturity (Hebrews 5:12-6:3).

A PERSONAL QUESTION

How do you know you are growing spiritually?

#28:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SANCTIFICATION: COMPLETE VICTORY OVER SIN

From a negative perspective, the process of sanctification arises from what needs to be overcome on the way to full Christ-likeness. Sin in all its strongholds and effects must be overcome.

Sanctification brings about our PARTICIPATION in the holiness of Christ in heart and practical daily walk. Sanctification gives us victory over the POWER of sin as well as full cleansing from the pollution of sin.

1. VICTORY OVER SIN. His gift of the Holy Spirit & high priestly ministry of prayer provides the power. John 1:32, 33; Hebrews 2:17, 18; 7:25

2. CLEANSING FROM SIN. – His blood provides the continual cleansing. 1 John 1:5-9

3. CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE – We become who we continually gaze upon. As we keep our eyes focused on Christ, the Holy Spirit progressively molds us to become more and more like Him. Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 2:21; 2 Corinthians 3:18.

#29:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
A-B-C SANCTIFICATION:
COMPLETE VICTORY OVER SIN

Sanctification happens in the following arenas:

- ABIDING IN CHRIST.

  Personal, close and continual fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is the root and foundation of becoming more and more like Christ. John 15 contains the essential principles and disciplines of abiding in Christ. The BASICS are absolutely essential, as shown in The Wheel Illustration (designed by The Navigators):

  1. CHRIST THE LORD, always at the Center of your life.
  2. Regular time with Christ in the WORD.
  3. Regular time with Christ in PRAYER.
  4. Regular time in FELLOWSHIP with fellow disciples in the Body of Christ.
  5. Consistent WITNESS to unbelievers within our circle of influence.
  6. Consistent living out of the HOLY SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE ("The Obedient Christian in Action" continually under the control of the Holy Spirit).

- BODY LIFE. We have been incorporated into the Body of Christ, and it is this inter-connected relationship within the Body that God uses as a workshop to melt, mold and mature us, through the "one-another" ministries that members mutually exercise within the Body through the mutual exercise of spiritual gifts in building up the whole Body. From Ephesians 4:16, please note the words: "joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share".

  Ephesians 4:15, 16:

  1 Peter 4:10, 11:

- COOPERATIVE MINISTRY in fulfilling the Great Commission.

  Spiritual growth becomes exponential as disciples work together as a team to join God in accomplishing His one great work laid out in the Great Commission.

Philippians 2:12-18:

1 Corinthians 3:5-11:

#30:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SANCTIFICATION: DIVINE-HUMAN PARTNERSHIP

Sanctification is a divine-human partnership. God has a part and the believer has a part, and the two parts must work together in proper balance. This partnership is described in Philippians 2:12, 13:

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; **13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Someone described this partnership as follows: "We must work out what God has worked in."

God gives both the DESIRE for and the POWER to live a holy life, to become more and more Christ-like.

#31:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SANCTIFICATION: PUT OFF

As we have seen in our previous study, the process of becoming transformed into the image of Christ is a divine-human partnership. God gives to us both the motivation and the power to "work out" in our daily life what He has "worked in" through His Spirit into our hearts.

Ephesians 4:22-24 prescribes a 3-Step Process that every believe must be actively engaged in:

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, **23** and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24** and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

- STEP 1: PUT OFF: Stop, get rid, take off (like old, dirty clothes) the former sinful deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships of our old life apart from Christ;

a. We must identify clearly what those sinful deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships are.

b. We must make definite, decisive actions to stop, root out, and permanently forsake those deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships.

Jesus and the apostles give detailed lists of these deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships. Please, over a period of days, weeks if necessary, take time to study these lists and ask the Holy Spirit to use these lists as a searchlight to expose these deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships in your heart; then confess these and ask God through the blood of Jesus to cleanse these thoroughly out of your life.

Mark 7:20-23

1 Peter 2:1

Colossians 3:5-9

Ephesians 4:17-22, 25-31; 5:3-7, 15-18

Note, however, that this battle of rooting out the sinful deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships of our old life is a life-long campaign. We must maintain the spirit of repentance and continually pray with the Psalmist (139:23, 24):

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
24 And see if *there is any* wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

#32:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SANCTIFICATION: RENEW YOUR MIND

The role of the mind is pivotal in the process of becoming transformed into the image of Christ. Three facts about the renewed mind:

- FACT 1: We receive the mind of Christ as a gift of grace given to us at regeneration and when we receive the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:12-16).

- FACT 2: We must intentionally appropriate and practice the mind of Christ specifically in His complete humility and absolute obedience (Philippians 2:5-8).

- FACT 3: We must continually practice the discipline of RENEWING OUR MIND as part of the 3-Step Process of Sanctification laid out for us in Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:9, 10).

Ephesians 4:22-24:
22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, **23** and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24** and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Colossians 3:9, 10:
9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, **10** and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.

The above scriptures indicate the direction in which the mind renewal needs to progress.

a. There must be a renewal of knowledge;

b. This knowledge must be according to the image of the Creator;

c. The image is characterized by true righteousness and holiness.

In this process of mind renewal God provides two powerful resources:

a. RESOURCE #1: THE WORD OF GOD (Colossians 3:16; cp. Psalm 1:1-3; 119:9-11; 2 Timothy 3:15-17).

   To make full use of the Word of God as resource for mind renewal we must take it in through six avenues: hear, read, study, memorize, meditate, obey.

b. RESOURCE #2: THE HOLY SPIRIT (Ephesians 5:18, 19; John 14:26; 16:7-15).

   To make full use of the Holy Spirit as resource for mind renewal we must make sure we are continually filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit and continually living in obedience to His leading (Romans 8:14).

#33:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
SANCTIFICATION: PUT ON

The third step in the 3-Step Process of Sanctification must always follow intentionally, habitually, decisively.

- STEP 3: PUT ON THE NEW MAN.

We must intentionally, habitually, decisively put on the deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships of the new life in Christ.

Just as the deeds and attitudes, habits and relationships of the old sinful life were listed, even so those of the new life in Christ are clearly catalogued. Please carefully study the list of godly characteristics and practices, which a believer must put on:

Colossians 3:12-17

Ephesians 4:25-32; 5:1, 2, 8-10, 15-21

This critical step of PUTTING ON is also described in the following ways:

- PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD (Ephesians 6:10-18; Romans 13:12, 13).
- PUT ON CHRIST (Romans 13:14)
- WALK IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT (Galatians 5:16, 22-25).

As in the step of PUTTING OFF, this process of PUTTING ON the new life in Christ is a life-time discipline of following Christ, a moment-by-moment, step-by-step daily walk of faith and obedience, walking behind Him, stepping in His footprints, putting one foot in front of another.

#34:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
GLORIFIED: ALREADY IN THE PAST TENSE?

Let's read again Romans 8:29, 30; this time, let's note the tenses of the five actions of God in the Plan of Salvation:

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. **30** Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Did you catch the past tense of the verb GLORIFIED? Isn't glorification still a future event, which will happen at the Second Coming of Christ? Was there a grammatical oversight here by Paul, and does this cast doubt on the doctrine of divine inspiration of the scriptures?

No, there is no grammatical mistake here. So what message is Romans 8:29, 30 communicating to us about God's plan of salvation? The clue can be found precisely in the past tense of GLORIFIED. The final action of God is described in the past tense, why? As far as God is concerned, this final action (like the previous four actions: FOREKNEW, PREDESTINED, CALLED, and JUSTIFIED) is already an accomplished fact, a "done deal!

From our human perspective, the experience of glorification is something still in the future at the Second Coming of Christ.

From God's perspective the whole plan of salvation is as good as finished, completed, done! To the God by whom and for whom all things were created, when He made the first step in implementing His plan to bring a family to glory, there was no doubt at all that what He began He would surely finish without fail. This is the meaning of the following scriptures:

> *John 6:37-40: 37* **37** All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. **38** For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. **39** This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. **40** And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.".
>
> *Philippians 1:6:* being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.

#35:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
GLORIFICATION: GOD'S GOOD WORK

We ask again, what is God's good work which He began in eternity before the creation of the world, the work He will surely bring to completion at the day of Jesus Christ? Two aspects:

- THE HUMAN ASPECT

First, the human aspect concerns His plan of bringing a special family to glory, whose members are all conformed to the image of His Son, who are incorporated to form one Body of which that very Son Himself as the Head. Please carefully read again Romans 8:29 and Hebrews 2:10.

This time let's go on to read Hebrews 2:11-13:
11 For both He who [g]sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, **12** saying:
"I will declare Your name to My brethren;
In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."

13 And again:
"I will put My trust in Him."
And again:
"Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."

In Hebrews 2:10 we saw that Christ is God's designated Captain and Sanctifier of the family that's in process of formation. In verses 11-13 we Christ at the end of the successful process now presenting the perfected family to His Father. Together at that graduation day He will lead the numberless host of the redeemed in worship to God!

- THE COSMIC ASPECT

The culmination of God's good work is described in its cosmic effect in Ephesians 1:10, 11:
10 that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

We know what happened in the beginning. Sin shattered the cosmic unity of the original perfect creation. God's plan of salvation had, for its goal, the complete restoration of that unity. At the culmination of God's work His plan for the cosmos will be accomplished by gathering all things into unity under the complete unquestioned headship of His Son. This unified cosmos is described as the new heaven and new earth in which God will personally live among His people forever and ever.

#36:
FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH
GLORIFICATION: FOUR OBSERVATONS

God's Plan of Salvation is guaranteed to be fully realized in the end.

What then can we say in conclusion? At least four observations:

(1) GOD'S WORK

God's Plan of Salvation is God's work alone from beginning to end. God is the sovereign subject or actor in the five actions: GOD foreknew; GOD predestined; GOD called; GOD justified; GOD glorified (Romans 8:29, 30; Ephesians 1:11).

(2) GOD'S GRACE

The plan of salvation is by God's grace alone. He foreknew and predestined certain people not because of any merit on their part but simply because of His sovereign love and mercy.

This is what God told Israel in the past: Deuteronomy 7:6-8.

This is what God tells Christians today: Ephesians 2:8-10.

(3) HUMAN ACCOUNTABILITY

But humans are still accountable to God for their choices and deeds. How do we reconcile God's sovereign will with human responsibility? We cannot reconcile these two truths. We simply believe both truths equally, and act accordingly.

- Truth 1: God is free to do all His will in His creation.

- Truth 2: Someday everyone will face the judgment seat of God, and they will receive their rewards or punishment as they deserve. The basis of judgment will be God's law (the law written in stone for some, or for others the law written in the heart (Romans 2:12-16; 14:10-12).

(4) GOD'S GLORY

In the end, all the work of creation and all the work of redemption will result in the glory of God alone (Romans 11:33-36).

Hallelujah!